

THE 119TH INFANTRY

CHAMBER OF COMMERCE OF WILMINGTON WILL PRINT ITS HISTORY AS A COMPLIMENT

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Members, and friends of the 119th Infantry will be interested to learn that the history of this regiment has been written by Coleman B. Carnway and George A. Shuford. The Chamber of Commerce of Wilmington, North Carolina, is going to print this history as a compliment to the regiment. An advance copy of the history has been deposited with the North Carolina Historical Commission by Colonel J. Van. B. Metts, formerly of the 119th Infantry, now Adjutant-General of North Carolina.

The history is written in clear and accurate style, with particular attention to the technique of the training, movement and operations of the regiment. It lacks the animation and fullness of the history of the 113th Field Artillery, however, and the completeness of documentary material that characterizes the history of the 105th Engineers. A roster of the 119th Infantry, complimentary letters, citations, reprints of publications showing the life of the regiment would make attractive appendices to the narrative which alone makes up the volume in its present shape. The story of the regiment is, however, an impressive record of achievement.

The Second North Carolina Infantry was sent to the Mexican Border June 16, 1916. It was never mustered out of service, but was sent to Camp Sevier August 1, 1917, when it became the 119th Infantry of the newly-organized 30th Division. Although it was added to from other states, the regiment remained always a North Carolina unit by a large majority.

At Camp Sevier the regiment built its company streets and cleared its parade grounds from the virgin forest, settled down to work under Colonel Metts, and made good in spite of poor equipment and the severity of the winter of 1917-1918.

On May 11, 1918, the regiment sailed from the United States on the British ships, *Ascania* from Hoboken, *Haverford* from Boston, and *Laomadon* from Boston. Assembling in convoy at Halifax, Nova Scotia, they sailed across the Atlantic safely to Liverpool. The voyage was marked by little sickness and the appearance of only one submarine, which was promptly squelched by the torpedo boat convoy. Landing in Liverpool May 27, 1918, it went at once across England and the Channel, through Calais to the Racques training area in France, arriving there May 29, and being bombed by airplanes that same date. The regiment was assigned to the British armies, having to use both British equipment and British methods. The famous Black Watch Regiment, and the Gordon Highlanders became the teachers of the 119th Infantry. Sir Douglas Haig and General Pershing reviewed the regiment, commended it for its military accomplishments, and signaled the superb physique of its men. July 2nd saw the regiment moving up to the sector near Watou, Belgium, presumably to complete their training in a quiet sector of the front, but recent shifting of the German plans had changed this into an active sector. So it is that the 119th plunged into the thick of combat at once, losing many men, but succeeding in a drive on Mount Kemmel, on August 31.

On September 7, the regiment withdrew from the lines and began to re-organize itself and to practice attacking with the support of tanks. Hitherto the regiment had been with the 2nd British Army. It now became a part of the 4th British Army, and September 22 moved into the lines before the St. Quentin Canal. Here it was to attack the Hindenburg Line.

On September 29, the 119th Infantry, supported on the right by the 120th Infantry and on the left by the 27th American Division, broke through the Hindenburg Line at Nauroy. The 27th American Division was unable to